

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 5408

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS, JA

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENTS IN CASE OF KIM TAE-CHUNG

SUMMARY: NEWS MEDIA REPORTS STATEMENTS BY PUBLIC PROSECUTOR GENERAL, MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION, FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND OPPOSITION PARTIES CONCERNING KIM CASE. KIM HAS BEEN VISITED BY NUMEROUS POLITICIANS AND REPORTS AND HAS BEEN INTERVIEWED BY THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR.

1. PROSECUTOR GENERAL YI PONG SONG HELD PRESS CONFERENCE MORNING OF AUGUST 14. HE STATED THAT THE ROKG WILL ARREST THE OFFENDERS AND UNCOVER THE SAVE THE NATION LEAGUE AND ANNOUNCED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL INVESTIGATION FORCE FOR THIS PURPOSE. YI SAID THAT THE ROKG WOULD NOT TURN KIM TAE-CHUNG OVER TO THE JAPANESE AUTHORITIES.

2. MINISTER OF CULTURE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION
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YUN CHIN-YONG IS QUOTED AS STATING THAT IT IS

FORTUNATE THAT KIM IS ALIVE AND HOPING THAT THE OFFENDERS WILL BE ARRESTED SOON. HE THANKED JAPANESE POLICE AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR EFFORTS.

3. KOREAN PRESS QUOTES JAPANESE VICE FOREIGN MINISTER AS REMARKING THAT THE INCIDENT IS DEVELOPING IN A DIRECTION NOT FAVORABLE TO FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ROK AND JAPAN. JAPANESE JUSTICE MINISTRY AUTHORITIES ARE REPORTED IN ROK PRESS TO HAVE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT KIM'S EXIT FROM JAPAN, WHETHER WILLING OR NOT, CONSTITUTES A VIOLATION OF JAPANESE EXIT REGULATIONS. IN RESPONSE TO THESE ALLEGED REPORTS FROM JAPAN THE PRESS QUOTES A ROK MOFA SPOKESMAN AS SAYING THAT ALTHOUGH KIM LEFT JAPAN IN VIOLATION OF THE LAW, THE ROK IS NOT OBLIGATED TO TURN HIM OVER TO THE JAPANESE BECAUSE NO TREATY OF EXTRADITION EXISTS.

4. YANG IL DONG, UDP LEADER STATES THAT HE IS GLAD KIM HAS COME BACK ALIVE. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE ROKG SHOULD ALLOW KIM TO CONDUCT FREE OPPOSITION ACTIVITIES, AND STOP ITS PRESSURE ON THE OPPOSITION. HE ADDED THAT THE SO CALLED "SAVE THE NATION YOUTH LEAGUE" MUST BE UNCOVERED SOON.

5. NDP ISSUED STATEMENT EXPRESSING PLEASURE THAT KIM HAS RETURNED ALIVE. THE NDP SPECULATED THAT WITHOUT ASSISTANCE FROM "CERTAIN PARTIES" IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE KIDNAPPED KIM AND TO HAVE FORCED HIM BACK TO KOREA. THE NDP ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT IT IS PLANNING TO FORM A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE ON THE KIM CASE.

6. SINCE HIS RETURN KIM HAS BEEN VISITED BY A STEADY STREAM OF NEWSMEN AND POLITICIANS INCLUDING HONG IK-PYO, MADAME PAK SUN-CHON, KIM WON-MAN, CHONG UN-KAP, PAK HAN-SANG, CHONG IL-HYONG,
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AND YANG IL-DONG. PUBLIC PROSECUTORS, WHO WERE TURNED AWAY BY KIM LAST NIGHT, ALSO INTERVIEWED KIM MORNING OF AUGUST 14.

7. WHILE CLEARLY TIRED, KIM'S PHYSICAL APPEARANCE ON TV FILM CLIPS IS FAIRLY GOOD WITH MINOR CUTS SHOWING ON HIS FACE.

8. COMMENT: MEDIA IS CONTINUING UNDER GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP ALTHOUGH THEY ARE ALLOWED TO DEVOTE BANNER FRONT PAGE TREATMENT TO HIS REAPPEARANCE AND HIS ACCOUNT OF THE ABDUCTION. PRESS REPORTS TO EFFECT GOJ WANTS KIM BACK BECAUSE HE DIDN'T COMPLY WITH EXIT PROVISIONS, COUPLED WITH MOFA "DEFENSE" OF KIM'S RIGHT TO REMAIN IN ROK, STRIKES A VERY UNLIKELY NOTE.

9. KIM'S SURPRISE APPEARANCE AND SUBSEQUENT ACCOUNT OF ABDUCTION HAS CAUSED A MAJOR PUBLIC SENSATION. INITIAL REACTION OF EMBASSY CONTACTS IS ONE OF SURPRISE AND RELIEF THAT KIM IS ALIVE. THERE IS ALSO WIDESPREAD BELIEF THAT KIDNAPPING AND KIM'S SUBSEQUENT RETURN TO ROK COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH INVOLVEMENT OF ROK-CIA.
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